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DE RUEHAC #0095 0301519  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 301519Z JAN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3679  
INFO RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC  
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL//SCJ5//  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS ASUNCION 000095

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/BSC AND EB/IFD/OIA  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LAC/AA  
STATE PASS TO USTR FOR LYANG  
NSC FOR SUE CRONIN  
TREASURY FOR OSIA MAUREEN WAFER  
TREASURY FOR OTA WARFIELD, VAN KOCH, MILLAR  
COMMERCE FOR ITA SARAH COOK  
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD DAN JOHNSON

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PA](#)  
SUBJECT: PARAGUAY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UPDATE, JANUARY  
21-27, 2006

REF: A. ASUNCION 0079 AND PRECEDING

[1](#)B. ASUNCION 0001 AND PRECEDING

[1](#)1. (U) Summary

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-- GOP and Morocco Sign Agreement to Facilitate Bilateral  
Investment and Relations  
-- Preparations for Election Not Easy  
-- Child Pornography Bill Becomes Law  
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GOP and Morocco Sign Agreement to Facilitate Bilateral  
Investment and Relations  
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[1](#)2. (U) On January 19, FM Rachid and visiting Moroccan Foreign  
Minister Mohamed Benaissa signed a document calling for a  
strengthening of economic relations between the two  
countries. Rachid and Benaissa also agreed to implement a  
bilateral commission, to meet during the first half of 2006,  
which will establish cooperation guidelines and specific  
actions. The commission will seek to enhance relations in  
the economic, political, technical and scientific, and  
cultural fields. The representatives of the two countries  
also announced the opening of Embassies to facilitate  
cooperation. During Benaissa,s trip to Paraguay, he also  
met with Vice President Castiglioni to discuss further  
expansion of Mercosur,s relations with the Arab world.

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Preparations for Election Not Easy  
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[1](#)3. (SBU) On 1/26, PolOff discussed preparations for the  
February 19 Colorado elections with Liliana Benitez, Director  
of Public Relations at the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSJE).  
Benitez says the TSJE has acquired more than 11,000  
electronic voting machines, of which, more than 20 percent  
are not operational. Some require a simple battery change,  
while others have more serious problems and will need to be  
replaced. The original request was for 17,000 machines. The

voting machines were to be delivered by TSJE vehicles, but it was later learned that the vehicles were not fit to make the trips to the more than 400 voting stations because of lack of maintenance and old age. Other government agencies will provide TSJE with vehicles to transport machines and personnel to the locations. Septel to follow.

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Child Pornography Bill Becomes Law  
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14. (U) On 1/27, the Child Pornography legislation formally became law when it was published in the Official Bulletin (Gaceta Oficial). The bill previously passed the Senate on 11/24/05 and the Chamber of Deputies on 12/15/05. The new law calls for sentences of 5 to 10 years in jail for those convicted of child pornography.  
CASON